

I raise the matter of 'early and late' emergence with reference to the on-going discussions concerning climate change and global warming. These so-called 'early and late' emergences would appear to be of normal occurrence 40 years ago on the Purbeck heaths. Might the apparent dearth of records be as a result of lepidopterists not running light traps on open lowland heath between January–March and November–December? Because of this, the small but regular emergence in these months on these southern heaths has gone unnoticed. The value of the Rothamsted trap, if placed in a particular habitat, is that the catch can be generally associated with the general environs of the trap site. This trap was sited on open heath that would have been contiguous with over 250 ha of lowland heath. From the data presented it would suggest that at least on the Purbeck heaths, *P. hippocastanaria* occurs throughout the year but in small numbers during the winter months. It is interesting to note from the Rothamsted Insect Survey trap at Yarnar Wood, Devon, which borders heathland, that this species was recorded regularly during 1992 from mid-March onward (Riley, 1993).

If these records were associated with the current time, we would probably be suggesting that this could be an effect of milder winters, which we are now experiencing in south Dorset. However, the records presented refer to the early 1970s, when winters were colder, with regular hard frosts and some snow were the norm.

The data would also suggest that the main time for emergence in this part of the country for the first brood is February to April, and for the second brood from July to August.

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An ant's home is its castle: further notes on the synanthropy of *Lasius brunneus* (Latr.) (Hymenoptera: Formicidae)—Over Christmas 2003 I visited Berkeley Castle, Gloucestershire, where Castle Director Elizabeth Halls mentioned that they had ants in the roof timbers within the Great Hall. They had been brought down with debris throughout the summer for at least the previous two years when the cleaners had swept one of the stone corbels. Being rather intrigued by the idea of ants nesting in wooden timbers 16 feet up inside a 13th century room, I requested that some of these ants be collected when they were next found.

In mid-May 2004, I discovered a jar of sawdust from the Castle on my desk. The sawdust contained a number of dead ants and they were identified as *Lasius brunneus* (Latrielle). This species is very abundant at Whitcliff Deer Park nearby, where it inhabits its more usual habitat of tree trunks. Here I have confirmed it from *Quercus robur* L., *Aesculus hippocastanum* L. and *Crataegus monogyna* Jacq., and have also seen it on *Malus domestica* Borkh. elsewhere.

Jones (2003) notes that this species had been found raiding a tin of biscuits, though they may have originated from outside. Attewell (2004) reports four

occasions of the species either entering buildings to raid food cupboards, or dwelling within the wooden timbers of buildings and utilising an unknown food source. However, there was no available food source near the Great Hall and it seemed unlikely that the roof itself would be able to provide sufficient food, so further investigation was made.

Having realised that the only food source nearby would be either dead animal matter within the wooden beams or food outside, the roof was checked. Sure enough, *L. brunneus* was found on the masonry, though these appeared to be nesting within the masonry itself and could be watched entering holes beside one of the stones. Czechowski *et al.* (2002) note that the species is occasionally found in brick or stone buildings, though this may be the first time that this habit has been recorded in the UK. The only other ant species that was noticed sharing the castle roof with the *L. brunneus* were a small number of *L. niger* (L.) s.s.

Further observation of this colony clearly showed two trails of *L. brunneus* workers, one of which was followed about a metre to the carcass of a pill woodlouse (*Armadillidium* sp.). The workers were clearly scavenging from this carcass, carrying small pieces back to the nest.

The other trail led along some electrical cables, which went over the wall and about three metres down the side of the castle. These cables then fed into a hole in the wall, where honeybees *Apis mellifera* L. had made their nest. It is likely, therefore, that the ants were entering the bee colony and stealing honey. The bees themselves did not seem concerned and the steady stream of ants moving up and down the cables indicated that this may have been a major source of food. Certainly, it would more than make up for the lack of aphids and therefore honeydew on the castle roof, which is their normal food source (Czechowski *et al.*, 2002).

Another observation was the much smaller size of the masonry nesting *L. brunneus* when compared with those from inside the castle. The reasons for this seem unclear, as it would appear that their food supply would not be limiting their maximum size. One speculation is that the available crevices in the masonry were narrower than the beetle bore holes in wood that they normally nest in, and that this was in turn affecting the size of the ants themselves. This would lead to the conclusion that they do not excavate nest sites themselves, but instead rely entirely upon already available tunnels and crevices.

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Female Oriental Fruit Moth *Grapholita molesta* (Busck) (Lepidoptera: Tortricidae) reared from larva found in nectarine—On 12 September 2003 I purchased a 1 kg punnet of nectarines from the Lidl supermarket in Shirley, Southampton, Hampshire (VC 11), when I noticed a bore-hole in one of the fruits. The punnet-label specified the nectarines, *Prunus persica* (L.) Batsch var. *nectarina* (Aiton), as being Italian